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ART. IX.—*Woodbridge's Annals of Education*.

*American Annals of Education and Instruction*. Edited  
by WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE. Vol. I.—III. Boston.  
1831—3.

ALTHOUGH it is, perhaps, not strictly within the province of a Review to pass judgment upon the merits of other works of a similar kind, we have been for some time past intending to recommend particularly to the notice and favor of our readers, the very valuable monthly journal, which is published in this city by Mr. Woodbridge, under the title of *American Annals of Education and Instruction*. It would be superfluous to enlarge upon the importance of the subjects to which the work is devoted: that there is no question in the public mind upon that point, is sufficiently shown by the extraordinary efforts that are making in all quarters for improvement in education. It is equally apparent, that one or more journals, exclusively devoted to this subject, if properly conducted, must serve a most valuable purpose; and are, in fact, almost indispensable auxiliaries to any system of vigorous, enlightened, and concentrated action. We find accordingly, that in Germany, where the theory of education has been more scientifically studied, and more successfully reduced to practice than in any other part of the world, journals of this kind are very numerous. They are constantly published in all the ordinary forms of periodical literature, annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly, and even daily. They are also common in England, and most other parts of civilized Europe.

The work before us is, we believe, the only one of the kind that is published in this country, and we regret to learn that the patronage which it has hitherto received is not sufficient to justify its continuance. We sincerely hope, that efforts will immediately be made, with all the necessary vigor and spirit, by the friends of education throughout the country, for placing it upon a better footing. We consider it entitled, not less by the manner in which it is conducted, than by the nature of the subject, to the support and encouragement of all who are really interested in the cause. Few persons in the United States unite so many qualifications for carrying on such a work as Mr. Woodbridge; and no one could

employ them with a truer and more disinterested zeal for the object. After devoting several years to the business of practical education at home, and making himself known to the public by elementary works of acknowledged value and great popularity, Mr. Woodbridge travelled extensively in Europe, examined on the spot the most approved and celebrated institutions for education ;—became acquainted with their directors, and made himself familiar with the literature of the subject. On his return, he brought with him a large collection of the most valuable books and journals, that treat of it, mostly in the German language, and wholly unknown to the public, both here and in England. Provided with this rich stock of materials, and wishing to turn them to the best possible account for the good of the cause, he determined to publish them in a periodical form ; and became the proprietor and editor of the *Journal of Education*, which had just before been established in this city, and to which, in order to mark the commencement of a new series, he gave the title of *American Annals of Education and Instruction*. In this form the work has been continued for nearly three years ; and in the value and variety of its contents has fully realized the highest expectations that had been formed of it. We should regard its discontinuance as a serious public misfortune.

Among the numerous articles of interest and value that have appeared in this journal, we would particularly refer our readers to a series of letters, in which the editor gives an account of the Institution of Fellenberg at Hofwyl, in Switzerland. Mr. Woodbridge passed several months at this place, and examined it with the attention due to its celebrity. Since his return, he has been in constant correspondence with Fellenberg. His account of the establishment is very complete ; and, if detached from the Annals, would form of itself a very valuable work. It is well known, that the leading feature of the Institution at Hofwyl is the combination of manual, and particularly agricultural labor, with study. The practicability and expediency of education upon this plan, are daily becoming more and more objects of attention and inquiry in this country, and a satisfactory account of the Institution, which has been the great model of all others of the kind, is now wanted as a book of common reference. We know of none at all to be compared with this of Mr. Woodbridge.

The series of letters, by the editor, upon the Infant School of

Geneva, is also of particular interest. In these, he distinctly points out, and illustrates by the practice of that Institution, the advantages that may really be made to result from such schools, as well as the serious dangers that attend them, if injudiciously conducted. The papers on the introduction of vocal music, as a branch of common education, are exceedingly curious and important. We are glad to learn that the labors of Mr. Woodbridge upon this subject have already produced very important practical results in this city, where we have now an academy of music, and several well-frequented musical schools. The articles on the necessity of attention to physical and moral, in connexion with intellectual development, and upon the advantages of bathing and swimming, may also be mentioned as worthy of particular notice. There is, in short, hardly a number of the work, which does not contain, in addition to a large mass of information on the common topics connected with the subject, one or more essays of a novel, curious and important character.

We are aware that any journal of this kind must work itself gradually into the public favor: but we are still surprised, that the *Annals* have not yet obtained a larger share. We copy from the last number the following *Notice to Subscribers*, exhibiting the present state of the work; and earnestly repeat our wish and hope, that the friends of education in this neighborhood and throughout the country will immediately make the exertion necessary to ensure its continuance.

‘Repeated attempts have been made to establish a periodical on Education, but with little success. This work is the only one of a general character, which now exists in the United States, so far as we are informed. Since its origin, as the “*Journal of Education*,” it has never been profitable to the editor, nor to its early publishers, except as a medium of advertising. Its first editor was compelled to abandon it; and for some time after, no one was found willing to assume its responsibilities permanently. The present editor returned, after several years spent in examining the state of education in Europe, charged by the friends of this cause abroad to make known the improvements which they had found so valuable. He believed it essential to the improvement of education among us, to have some periodical devoted to the investigation of our own wants, and the publication of our own plans and experiments, which should serve as the medium of communication among the friends of the cause, at home and abroad.

‘In order to secure a publication of this kind, so far as possible, from all influence, or suspicion of influence, he purchased the property of the “Journal,” and subsequently of the “Education Reporter,” and has conducted it for three years, at a very considerable expense. His great object was to place the work on such a basis, that it might assume a *permanent and national character*, and he did not take the charge of it himself, until he had endeavored in vain to enlist others, in his view, more competent, by an offer of all its proceeds, and regular contributions. In order to make it known more extensively, to interest the friends of education, and to circulate the information he had received, about 500 volumes and 5,000 extra numbers have been sent out, without any payment, to public institutions, missionary schools, individuals engaged in education, and the editors of newspapers.

‘The ardent interest expressed in the subject, throughout our country, the general approbation of the work itself, and the gradual increase of subscriptions, seemed to justify him in proceeding, even without immediate returns; and in publishing a larger number of copies than were immediately demanded. He believed it safe to assume that in a country, containing 10,000,000 of freemen “better educated than those of any European community,” and where the subject of education excites so much attention, at least 1,500 persons would be found anxious to obtain all the light of modern improvement on this important subject, and ready to sustain a publication devoted to it. Yet the event has proved, that *less than nine hundred* can be found to support a work, which, for three years, has received warm expressions of approbation from parents, and teachers, and the public press. Notwithstanding all the expenses incurred, he has never received a dollar from the publication, either as editor or proprietor. On the contrary, the accounts for the two first years show a large amount, in addition to all the receipts, *still due* for printing and paper, for which he is responsible.

‘During three years, a large stock of materials, already prepared, and the aid of able contributors, enabled him to conduct the work without giving up other employments. The friends of education, he finds, are generally too much engaged in active effort to continue this aid; and the increased labors of editing, and especially the examination of books, now require so much of his time, as to allow little efficient effort of any other kind. The future proceeds, with the present number of subscribers, will afford no return for his labors, or those of contributors; much less any means of paying past arrearages. Could the subscription be increased, it would indeed provide for the future, and for this only. Could the volumes now on hand be disposed of by

those inclined to favor the object, without deduction for the commission of agents, the sum now due could be paid. If this cannot be effected, he can see no other alternative, but to abandon the work at the close of the present year, and resort to other means to provide for expenditures, which many believe have contributed to benefit the public, by the diffusion of valuable information.

‘He has come to this conclusion with great reluctance, and it will give him pain to bid farewell to a large number of his subscribers, whose personal interest in the work has been fully expressed. He has not made known these circumstances earlier, because he had hoped to sustain its losses himself: but he feels more and more satisfied, that its permanency cannot be insured, unless the friends of education will unite in supporting it, by subscriptions, and by contributing to its pages. Could each subscriber consider himself an agent for life, we believe this could be accomplished. If *men of education* will not sustain it, the *ignorant* certainly will not do it. It has no *party character* or *popular attractions* to recommend it. Nor can it furnish the mass of matter, merely copied by the printer from foreign works, or present the attractive engravings, which give such wide circulation to some of our periodicals. It depends for its existence, on that number, comparatively small, who know how to prize solid and useful information. If they refuse their aid, it must expire.’

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#### ART. X.—Dante.

*L'Ottimo Commento della Divina Commedia, Testo Inedito d'un Contemporaneo di Dante. Citato degli Accademici della Crusca. Pisa. 1827.*

*A Commentary on the Divina Commedia of Dante, by one of his Contemporaries: now first published, and the same that is quoted by the Academy Della Crusca, under the title of L'Ottimo Commento, or the best Commentary.*

HOMER created poetry from chaos:—Dante, from corruption. Both were animated by a divine spirit. The power, which restores freshness to the forest when the gloom